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A HIGHLANDER OF THE LAST AGE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'MY FATHER THE LAIRD.'

IN a small house near one of the numerous pretty villages scattered along the sea-shore on the coast of Devonshire, there had lived for many years back a retired general officer, of some note in his profession. He had served from very early youth almost by the side of our Great Captain—beginning his career in India, fighting through the battles of the Peninsula, and resting with the army of occupation before Cambrai. He had passed a lifetime in the field. He had gained laurels, medals, orders, a knighthood, and a pension—a moderate pension for several severe wounds—which addition to his half-pay enabled him to pass the decline of his bachelor days in the tranquillity which suited his disposition. Time glided quietly on with him towards the end he appeared neither to wish for nor to dread. He had a small society of brother officers within his reach, which he mixed with occasionally. He paid a yearly visit to London in the spring, enjoyed a few weeks of his club, showed himself at a levée, and returned to his country life all the cheerfuller for this short intercourse with the busy world. He had the look of a happy man, although his habits were solitary. He lived much alone, rode or walked alone, often spending hours on the sea-shore alone, pacing up and down some unfrequented stretch of sands in a sort of reverie, or standing quite erect to gaze upon the waves, with his hands, in one of which he held a stick, crossed behind him. His manner was invariably self-possessed, calm, and not ungraceful, though his speech betrayed at times the peculiarity of accent never thoroughly got rid of by the Celtic tongue, and which appeared always more remarkable as he became animated in conversation. He seemed to have no relations, and no friends but his military companions. He never alluded to any but his campaigning days; nor would a trace of his childhood's home have ever been recovered, had not a small bundle of letters, left, with other papers, to the discretion of his executors, been found after his death in a curious old wooden box, that had evidently seen much travel. His extreme reserve on the subject of his early life makes it probable that he had forgotten these notices of it, or had intended to destroy them; but as they contained nothing discreditable to the fame of any concerned in their production, the following memoir has been compiled from them, as an interesting reminiscence of a class of our countrymen now 'passed away.'

Lieutenant-general Sir Hector Macneil, we will call him, was the eldest of a fine family of children, born and bred on a small farm in the Highlands. His father, who had served with distinction in the German wars, though a Glasgow merchant's son, quitted the army, when only a lieutenant, to settle on a property he had

inherited, a wadset of a hundred acres, on the extensive estates of a noble chief whose distant relation he then married. On this humble portion of a barren soil he established himself while yet in the prime of life, content with the quiet happiness the cultivation of his land insured to him. His wife, in addition to her gentle blood, brought him a fair portion in a large green chest, which it took nearly half-a-dozen sturdy Highlanders to lift from the dray it had been carried on. She had herself helped to fill it; for having had this marriage for some years in contemplation, her wheel in the long winter evenings had not been idle; and the result of her labours, added to her mother's thrift, had provided her with a far from contemptible plenishing. She had passed the season of giddy youth, and both bride and bridegroom being of active habits, well acquainted with the business of a farm, as it was understood in their times, the lieutenant and his wife began the world together with very comfortable feelings, backed by the regular arrival of his half-pay. Their house was rather a good one for the age: it had an attic storey, which, though low in the roof, gave four decent bedrooms to people of such simple manners. They themselves occupied a room upon the ground-floor, to the right hand of the passage on entering the house. To the left was the kitchen, and behind, on either side the staircase, was the best parlour and the strangers' room. To judge of the attics from the appearance of the more carefully-furnished ground-floor, they must have been little incumbered with movables. The best bedroom contained only a four-post wagon-roofed bedstead, with red checked curtains, a home-made rug by its side, a deal table, a wash-hand stand, two mahogany chairs, the seats covered with horse hair, and a print of the Countess of Coventry, whom the lieutenant had somewhere seen in the course of his military experience, and been so struck with, as to possess himself of this portrait of the beauty of his day. The print had hung in his own room during his bachelor life, but his wife disapproved of its situation, and removed it to a 'higher sphere.' The best parlour had a carpet reaching to the front legs of the closely-set chairs, ranged round the walls, two of which had stepped out of the ranks to accommodate the best bedroom. A long mahogany table was placed under the window; a square mahogany table stood in the middle of the room; and there was a cupboard, with glass doors to the upper shelves of it, revealing how rich they were in glass and china. In their own room, as they principally lived there, there was a box bed, closed during the day. The few books they had were ranged upon a hanging shelf; two swords were crossed over the fireplace; the green chest stood against the wall; a small bureau near the window sufficed for the keeping of the goodman's accounts; while a great display of clews of yarn, fixed on nails

over the green chest, a small table with her knitting, and a little wheel in the corner, proved the industry of the goodwife. In this room was served the neat tea breakfast, of which they alone partook. Here was laid the slight supper, followed by the 'tumbler,' out of which the lieutenant spared his wife a wine glass, after all the house had gone to rest. Here the children read their 'chapter,' and received their lectures for misconduct; and here sometimes, when their mother's heart was soft, they were regaled with a treat beyond the common from the large closet adjoining the box bed.

The kitchen, where the family lived, where the meals were prepared and eaten, and where all the various works were done, had a door almost in every side of it—one opening into a large dairy, another into a sort of scullery or back kitchen, another into the yard. There was a wide hanging chimney, from within which depended a set of strong pot-hooks, and where a bright peat fire blazed the whole year round. The room contained a well-filled dresser, a meal girdle, a large and a small table, pots and pans, and tubs and cogs, a reel, a muckle wheel, several small wheels, a bread tray, a girdle, forms, creepies, a chair or two, and, fastened against the wall, numberless articles required in the family business, or the result of the family industry. The two servant-maids, and one old trustworthy man, had their assigned places in this general rendezvous; the other out-of-door servants lived with the ploughman in a divot hut near at hand, among the rest of the offices, which were set down here and there, as if by chance, without any regard to the economy of time or space, or any attention to the keeping of them in the background. Underneath his own window Mr Macneil had laid out a flower-plot, which he had pleasure in attending to himself. He had a good vegetable garden close by, through a corner of which ran a rapid burn, overhung by weeping birch. The ground being unequal, and a few rocky stones checking the stream just as it left the garden, he had managed to carry part of the water through a long spout projecting over the highest of these, and thus formed a natural douche bath, beneath which he every morning placed himself, to alleviate the pain of a rheumatic shoulder, the consequence of wet bivouacs. The little burn, wandering lazily on, as if wearied by this fretful interruption, expanded as it left the garden into a wide but shallow pool, beneath an alder tree; which change in its habits the goodwife had taken advantage of, there to erect the posts where swung her copper, gipsy fashion, for her washing. A row of beehives faced the south, at the upper end of the garden, the profits of which—not small, under such careful management—they let accumulate, to form the fund from whence their boys were to be outfitted. The situation of the house had been curiously chosen—so near a wild mountain river, as to be within reach of its sudden overflow, an accident that happened frequently, and gave an air of desolation to the few acres immediately around, as the stones, and sand, and other wrack brought down by the water lay scattered over the ground in unsightly profusion. But the little stream itself was picturesque in its windings, the high banks opposite were richly wooded, and the cultivated plain, which stretched far away behind the farm-steading, towards the distant amphitheatre of fantastically-shaped gray mountains, contrasted agreeably with the rougher foreground.

The habits of the family were simple even for the period. They rose early, laboured hard all day, and retired early to rest. All without was supposed to be under the direction of the goodman, while the goodwife reigned supreme within, keeping every key, and not only directing all the various works, but assisting in their execution, and occasionally extending her watchful eye beyond her own particular limits, to where matters not especially under her control might not have gone on quite so prosperously without her. The children, of whom there were a round half-dozen, break-

fasted with the servants in the kitchen, though at a separate table; and often was the authoritative voice of Mrs Macneil heard of a morning, before she began the preparations for her own tea breakfast, calling out to her maid to 'put on the porridge for the pigs and the bairns.' At the noontide dinner she herself presided, as she always partook of the meal served at that time. In winter, it was almost invariably broth or kail, or beef brose the day after a bit of corned meat had been boiled, with potatoes. In summer, sowens, curds, mashed potatoes with milk, or oaten bread and cheese, were preferred to stronger food, particularly as the goodman never came home at this hour. With a hank in his pocket, he remained abroad till evening, when at the family supper time—a meal which was a sort of second or slighter edition of the dinner—the best the house afforded was prepared for him, and served to him in the family room. In his homespun, homed-dyed suit of dingy blue, Mr Macneil braved all weathers. The small cocked bonnet feared no showers, the gray ribbed worsted stockings, of his wife's good knitting, rendered him indifferent to the wet his ill-dressed brogues hardly protected his feet from. In summer, he often wore the little kilt, with bright scarlet hose, bound below the knee by a smart fringed garter; the plaid was flung across his shoulders at all seasons, except when made quite a wrap of during the severity of the winter. He often put his hand to his own work, though his busy wife sometimes reproved him for the gentlemanly indolence of his management. She showed no lady-like feelings of this nature herself, being eternally employed in directing all around her. She had the children and the servants up betimes. She kept the servants as busy as herself, and the children all fully occupied till it was time to start them for the school.

On their return home, she still found plenty to set them about; and for her maids, in the intervals of their more active labours there were the wheels at hand, so that not an idle moment passed; and the work was never done, for every season had its appointed task. In the winter, the spinning and the knitting went briskly on; a certain quantity, about the utmost that active hands could do, being required by her from her maids and her daughters weekly. In the spring, the yarn was dyed: there were mixings, and boilings, and rinsings, and dryings, one effect of which was, to keep the goodman long a-field superintending the ploughmen, for he seldom lingered much in the house during the progress of these chemical mysteries. Then came the blanket-washing, when such piles of comfort issued from beds and chests, as covered nearly a quarter of a mile of paling when they were hung out to dry. In summer, she had the yearly clearing of her napery—no small stock, for it was ever added to, and very carefully *hained*. The sheep-shearing, calf-rearing, butter and cheese-making, the bleaching of the linen webs returned from the weaver, kept the household busy till the harvest-time, after which the labours of the year began again. The goodwife set a bright example to her family; for she did not spare herself. She managed the dairy entirely, creaming the cogs, and making the butter, and breaking the curd for the cheese with her own hands. She also clear-starched her own high caps, ironed the shirts, and put the finishing strokes to almost all that every one else began. She moved slowly about the house in a linsey-woolsey gown of her own spinning, shot with two bright colours of her own dying; a shawl pinned over her handkerchief, a full white apron, and a large bunch of big bright keys fastened to her side. The close mutch over her braided hair in the mornings, was replaced towards noon by a high-crowned muslin cap covering a thicker, and between them she wore a gay ribbon bound about the head just above the lace-border. She was reckoned a good wife, and mother, and mistress, and to keep a full and hospitable house—the large closet in the useful room never being found empty. Cakes of oatmeal, scones of flour or barley-meal, good cheese, good butter, and some simple preserved fruits, were never wanting in it, with

bowls of rich cream from her full dairy, and bottles of various cordials—whisky plain, and whisky spiced, and whisky sweetened. Visitors on intimate terms were shown, without ceremony, by the mistress of this humble household into her ordinary living room, where the refreshments always offered were at hand. Those of higher degree passed on to the best parlour, there to wait for the bareheaded, barefooted maid in her blue flannel petticoat, and her white neatly-frilled bedgown, with her tray; for to meet without both eating and drinking, was unheard of in those days in the Highlands. And it was not a mere taste of cake and wine—a mere form of civility—it was good honest hunger well satisfied, the visitor having generally made a journey of some miles. It was a matter of duty with the host to partake of every article offered, even to the cordials, which had also to be tasted with every fresh arrival. Mrs Macneil carried her scrupulous adherence to these ceremonies of the olden time so far, that, in presenting powdered sugar and whisky, which was then much the fashion with the ladies, she invariably took the first spoonful out of the glass herself—a real relic of the barbarous ages, as the same spoon served all. Guests of their own degree often remained to a late dinner, when, if there were only gentlemen—which indeed mostly happened, as the Highland ladies seldom left their homes—the goodwife saw little more of them, her part being behind the scenes, to keep the punch-bowls going till long after they had better have been filled no more. It was rather a thickly-inhabited part of the country, full of half-pay officers and small lairds, and one or two retired merchants, at that time of day but little thought of, with one great house only, within a very large circuit of miles, the noble residence of the chief, to whom Mrs Macneil was distantly related.

Castle Fruch was a large building of gray stone, very irregularly constructed, surrounded by a perfect town of small houses and offices, placed on a wide moor, sheltered by a few very formal plantations, of what has been till lately called by the name of the Scotch fir; although its miserable appearance beside the natural forests of black pine, stretching in their grave beauty far up some of the more sheltered glens, might have shown to any observing eye how misnamed had been the interloper. A fine background of mountains relieved in some degree the uninteresting nature of the home scenery, and extensive shrubberies added a cheerful look to the immediate precincts of the castle. The laird of the clan Fruch passed the greater part of the year in this his bleak residence, keeping open house during the whole of the summer and autumn, and generally surrounding himself at all times with a constant variety of guests. He lived plainly in the hospitable manner befitting his station, his board being most plentifully provided, and the ever-changing company of all degrees being welcomed with unfailing cordiality. There was no attempt to encourage a select society. It was no mark of high caste to dine at the castle. Every one felt entitled to a place there, in a country where, however poor individual means might be, every man considered himself born a gentleman. The company consisted for the most part of the clan, all bearing the same surname with their chief, and repeating so constantly among them the one or two Christian names in favour with their race, that they could never have been distinguished but for the prevailing custom of conferring a sort of title on these far-spreading members of one family, each man being commonly known by the name of the place he lived at, whether it were his own, or merely a wadset, or even but his rented farm. And as in larger communities, so there was in this, degrees of rank perfectly recognised, although never offensively paraded. There were branches to the clan—cadets of the great house, gifted in far back times with such lands as they could keep or take, who had risen to independence, though they gloried in acknowledging the source from whence they had sprung. In their turn they had similarly provided for scions of their own stock; and thus in time the name

spread wide over the wild country they had settled in, descending even to those who laboured for their daily bread, though these, in general, had rather been adopted into the clan, when fleeing from justice or injustice in some other. All, however, felt themselves links of the one great chain which connected the least among them with their chief. When associating in his baronial hall, each fell into his own place easily, thus keeping up the manner of perfect equality, while, in reality, there was a wide difference between those whose station was below 'the salt' and the 'yellow drawing-room' section of the company, who entered the banqueting-room, and retired with Lady Margaret, the laird's high-bred lady, none of the miscellaneous remainder offering to attend upon her unless specially invited. Mr Macneil held a sort of middle rank amongst this assemblage. His commission, his manners, his wife's good birth, placed him above his wadset; but his known mercantile descent, and his very humble means, reduced him again in the scale of Highland society; so that he owed it to his sound common sense that he was a frequent invited guest at the castle.

As the lieutenant's sons grew up, they occasionally accompanied their father on these visits. They were ushered into what was to them the 'world,' with no further preparation than the donning of their Sunday suit; and they took their places in it with that simple composure born with the Highlanders. Their mother, indeed, had not omitted to inform them of their claim to a seat at their great relation's table; for she had her full share of pride, and she had given a due proportion to her sons of this failing of her age, instilling at the same time into their young minds firm moral feelings, worthy of the race from which she had descended. She was a woman of high principles, accurately discriminating between right and wrong, and never compromising the matter between them; yet, shrewd and active, she had always all her senses about her. After her household thrift, the one aim and end of her existence was the advancement in life of her children. She had hitherto well done her part as a good Highland wife and mother. She had gathered gear, kept all hands busy, advised her husband, nursed the babies, given habits of industry and obedience both to sons and daughters, with the best instruction within her reach. She had now to push her family on; and for this purpose, as regarded her sons, she looked to her chief for assistance, not as a favour, but as a right, for he well knew that they were his blood relations. It was the custom of the times for the great to keep their patronage, like their charity, at home among their own connexions and dependents, on whom, indeed, no act of kindness was spared when occasion offered for its being exercised. The laird, therefore, made little difficulty about obliging his cousin. Labour of any sort being utterly distasteful to the spirit of these children of the mountains, the army was then the refuge of all the unemployed—"to serve" being the sole ambition of the young Highlanders. And as commissions were easily obtained in that warlike period, when any man of influence asked for them, the lieutenant's eldest son had not long to wait before he saw himself gazetted. He passed the interim principally at the castle, Lady Margaret, out of regard to the parents, condescending to aid in fashioning the manners of the son. It was a happy novitiate for the future knight. With well-bred companions of his own age and sex, the days sped rapidly on in the pursuit of those active sports which still occupy the higher ranks during a Highland autumn, and were then almost the principal employment of all classes; while the fair daughters of the house, accomplished far beyond his simple ideas of female merit, gaily contributed to the cheerful passing of the evenings. Whether these influences altogether worked for good as to the young soldier's future happiness, however much they might elevate his feelings, is almost doubtful; for broken hints were scattered among the earlier letters, from which rather a melancholy romance of real life

could, with a little ingenuity, have been woven. But whatever may have been his youthful dream, his manhood was none the less vigorous for its indulgence. Bravely and honourably he won his way, well supporting, throughout his prosperous career, the character of a gentleman. With no education beyond the mere rudiments of such knowledge as he could acquire at the parish school, his manners formed only by the principles of rectitude, and the habits of application he had imbibed at home very slightly polished by a few months of intercourse with more refined society, Hector Macneil prepared to enter life without one feeling of timidity. Strong in the simple resolve to do his duty under every circumstance, he quitted his father's roof not without sorrow, but without fear. He had been brought up to expect this separation, to look forward to it as to a starting-point from whence his own independence was to spring, and good to result, through his means, to his family. Thus nerved by the hope of assisting those he loved, while reflecting credit on them by his own success, there was little room in his honest heart for the mere indulgence of the grief of leaving them. His courage drooped for one short moment only, when he bent before his mother for her blessing. Solemnly but calmly it was given, though the unusual paleness of her countenance betrayed something of what she felt on dismissing to the turmoil of the world her first-born. He left the north country with the chief. It was usual with the great men of those days to spend the winter frequently in the south with their families, and it was the custom for a considerable number of the clan always to attend their chief on this his progress. It was a very stately migration. There was a sort of body-guard of mounted gentlemen, with a crowd of humbler retainers on foot. The escort fell off as the great man travelled, till, towards the close of his journey, when he left the hills to enter upon the plains, only a few of his most intimate friends remained to take leave of him. At this point the lieutenant and his son parted. Calm, yet sorrowful, the old man retraced his steps to his humble mountain home. The young man moved on with equal steadiness to the fulfilment of his destiny. That they ever met again, is at the best uncertain; as among the papers alluded to there is no evidence of the fortunate soldier ever having revisited the Highlands.

NEW FACTS IN ASTRONOMY.

A WORK has just been published which reminds one of some of the achievements of the early ages of literature, when an enthusiastic and patient philosopher found a patron equally zealous, and devoted many years of his life to the accomplishment of a single object. We refer to Sir John Herschel's work*—the title of which is given below—and to the manner of its publication. To quote the author's words:—'To the munificent destination of his Grace the late Duke of Northumberland of a large sum in aid of its publication, it owes its appearance as a single and separate work, instead of a series of unconnected memoirs, scattered over the volumes of academical bodies.' Greatly to his honour, the present duke has completely carried out the intentions of his predecessor, who died before the volume was finished.

A simple enumeration of the contents of the book—a large quarto—will serve to convey some slight idea of its great scientific value. The observations comprise those of the southern nebulae, double stars of the southern hemisphere; astrometry, apparent magnitudes of stars; constitution of the galaxy in the southern hemisphere; Halley's comet, with remarks on its physical condition; satellites of Saturn; and lastly, obser-

vations of the solar spots. To all this labour, and to the bringing out of the work, a period of twelve years has been devoted. The results are described in language as philosophical as it is eloquent: many passages among the scientific details of the catalogues produce an impression on the reader equal to that caused by a sublime strain of poetry. We propose to lay before our readers such portions of the work as may appear most popularly interesting.

The late Sir William Herschel made, during his life, what he called 'sweeps of the heavens,' in which, as is well known, he discovered and investigated, amongst other celestial phenomena, those presented by nebulae. The results of these researches were published in the 'Transactions of the Royal Society,' but about the year 1825, Sir John Herschel proposed to re-examine the whole of his father's work, and spent eight years in the survey, which extended over 2306 nebulae and clusters of stars, 525 of which were described for the first time; and in addition, the places of 3000 or 4000 double stars determined. In this re-examination Sir J. Herschel made use of his father's twenty-foot reflector, over the manipulation of which, and the process of polishing the mirrors, he obtained a complete mastery. Afterwards, in obedience to an impulse arising out of the absorbing nature of the pursuit, he resolved on making a survey of the southern hemisphere, for the purpose of instituting comparisons with the northern. In pursuance of this object, as many readers are aware, he embarked with his apparatus for the Cape of Good Hope, where he arrived in January 1834. Having found a suitable residence, bearing the name of Feldhuyzen or Feldhausen, about six miles from Cape Town, in the direction of Wynberg, the instruments were fixed early in March, and ready 'to commence a regular course of sweeping.'

The hot season at the Cape—October to March—is said to afford many superb nights for observation, interrupted occasionally, however, by a wind called the 'black south-easter,' which attaches a black belt of clouds to the mountain, and stretches it over a large surface of the sky. At other times the air is so disturbed by the intense heat of the arid sandy plains, that distinct vision is impossible. 'Even in the hottest season, however, nights of admirable definition occur, especially looking southwards. But what is not a little remarkable, in the very hottest days, looking northwards over the burning tract intervening between Feldhausen and Table or Saldanha Bay, the most admirable and tranquil definition of the solar spots, and other phenomena of the sun's disk, is by no means unfrequent. In such cases, I presume the strongly-heated stratum of air incumbent on the surface of the soil, is swept off by the south-east wind blowing from False to Table Bay, before it ascends high enough to interfere with the visual ray.' 'It is, however,' we read, 'in the cooler months, from May to October inclusive, and more especially in June and July, that the finest opportunities occur for observation. The state of the air in these months, as regards definition, is habitually good, and imperfect vision is rather the exception than the rule. The best nights occur after the heavy rains which fall at this season have ceased for a day or two; and on these occasions the tranquillity of the images and sharpness of vision is such, that hardly any limit is set to magnifying power, but what the aberrations of the specula necessitate.'

A singular phenomenon was frequently observed, 'a nebulous haze,' which came on suddenly, and disappeared as rapidly; making the stars appear, while it lasted, as though surrounded by a 'nebulous photosphere of greater or less extent,' while to the naked eye the sky was perfectly clear. Similar phenomena occur in the atmosphere of England, but not with the frequency or suddenness of those at the Cape. The clouds, too, as seen from this southern extremity of Africa, are more opaque than in our latitudes: in England, astronomers not unfrequently observe the stars while veiled by a

* Results of Astronomical Observations made during the years 1834, 5, 6, 7, 8, at the Cape of Good Hope; being the Completion of a Telescope Survey of the whole Surface of the Visible Heavens, commenced in 1825. By Sir J. F. W. Herschel, Bart. London: Smith and Elder. 1847.

thin stratum of cloud; but at the Cape, the clouds are too opaque for the rays of light to pass through them.

Of the star marked α , in the constellation Argus, and the great nebula surrounding it, we are informed that 'there is perhaps no other sidereal object which unites more points of interest than this. Its situation is very remarkable, being in the midst of one of those rich and brilliant masses—a succession of which, curiously contrasted with dark adjacent spaces (called by the old navigators "coal-sacks"), constitute the *milky way* in that portion of its course which lies between the Centaur and the main body of Argus.' The number of stars in this region is immense, as many as 250 being in the field of the telescope at one time. But the great point of interest is the star α , which, in Halley's Catalogue, 1677, is marked as of the fourth magnitude, and in later Catalogues as of the second magnitude. 'It was on the 16th December 1837,' writes Sir John Herschel, 'that resuming the photometrical comparisons, in which, according to regular practice, the brightest stars in sight, in whatever part of the heavens, were first noticed, and arranged on a list, my astonishment was excited by the appearance of a new candidate for distinction among the very brightest stars of the first magnitude, in a part of the heavens with which, being perfectly familiar, I was certain that no such brilliant object had before been seen. After a momentary hesitation, the natural consequence of a phenomenon so utterly unexpected, and referring to a map for its configurations with the other conspicuous stars in the neighbourhood, I became satisfied of its identity with my old acquaintance α Argus. Its light was, however, nearly tripled.' The star attained its maximum of brightness, when it was nearly equal to α of the Centaur, on the 2d January 1838, after which it faded into its former appearance. But since that period, it has again brightened so as 'to have surpassed Canopus, and even to have approached Sirius in lustre.' This was in 1843, and was noticed by observers in different parts of the world; and again, in 1845, the star passed through a similar state of fluctuating brilliance. As Sir John Herschel observes—'A strange field of speculation is opened by this phenomenon. The temporary stars heretofore recorded have all become totally extinct. Variable stars, so far as they have been carefully attended to, have exhibited periodical alternations, in some degree at least regular, of splendour and comparative obscurity. But here we have a star fitfully variable to an astonishing extent, and whose fluctuations are spread over centuries, apparently in no settled period, and with no regularity of progression. What origin can we ascribe to these sudden flashes and relapses? What conclusions are we to draw as to the comfort or habitability of a system depending for its supply of light and heat on so uncertain a source?'

Of the nebula in connection with Argus, we read that, 'It would manifestly be impossible, by verbal description, to give any just idea of the capricious forms and irregular gradations of light affected by the different branches and appendages of this nebula. Nor is it easy for language to convey a full impression of the beauty and sublimity of the spectacle it offers when viewed in a sweep, ushered in as it is by so glorious and innumerable a procession of stars, to which it forms a sort of climax, justifying expressions which, though I find them written in my journal in the excitement of the moment, would be thought extravagant if transferred to these pages. In fact, it is impossible for any one with the least spark of astronomical enthusiasm about him to pass soberly in review, with a powerful telescope, and in a fine night, that portion of the southern sky which is comprised between the sixth and thirteenth hours of right ascension, and from 146 to 149 degrees of north polar distance; such are the variety and interest of the objects he will encounter, and such the dazzling richness of the starry ground on which they are represented to his gaze.'

Instances of variability in some of the stars of the

Little Bear have been detected of late years, on which Sir John Herschel writes, in a profound and suggestive strain of reasoning—'Future observation will decide whether the change which is thus proved to have taken place be of periodical recurrence. . . . Ignorant as we are, however, both of the cause of solar and stellar light, and of the conditions which may influence its amount at different times, the law of regular periodicity is one which ought not to be too hastily generalised; and at all events, there is evidence enough of slow and gradual change of lustre in many stars, since the earlier ages of astronomy, to refute all *a priori* assumption as to the possible length of the cycle of variation of any particular star. The subject is one of the utmost physical interest. The grand phenomena of geology afford, as it appears to me, the highest presumptive evidence of changes in the general climate of our globe. I cannot otherwise understand alternations of heat and cold, so extensive, as at one epoch to have clothed high northern latitudes with a more than tropical luxuriance of vegetation; at another, to have buried vast tracts of middle Europe, now enjoying a genial climate, and smiling with fertility, under a glacier crust of enormous thickness. Such changes seem to point to some cause more powerful than the mere local distribution of land and water (according to Mr Lyell's views) can be well supposed to have been. In the slow secular variations of our supply of light and heat from the sun, which, in the immensity of time past, may have gone to any extent, and succeeded each other in any order, without violating the analogy of sidereal phenomena which we know to have taken place, we have a cause, not indeed established as a fact, but readily admissible as something beyond a bare possibility, fully adequate to the utmost requirements of geology. A change of half a magnitude in the lustre of the sun, regarded as a fixed star, spread over successive geological epochs—now progressive, now receding, now stationary, according to the evidence of warmer or colder general temperature which geological research has disclosed, or may hereafter reveal—is what no astronomer would now hesitate to admit as in itself a perfectly reasonable and not improbable supposition. Such a supposition has assuredly far less of extravagance about it than the idea that the sun, by its own proper motion, may, in indefinite ages past, have traversed regions so crowded with stars, as to affect the climate of our planet by the influence of their radiation. Nor can it be objected that the character of a *vera causa* is wanting in such a hypothesis. Of the exciting cause of the radiant emanations from the sun and stars, we know nothing. It may consist, for aught we can tell, in vast currents of electricity traversing space (according to cosmical laws), and which, meeting in the higher regions of their atmospheres with matter properly attenuated, and otherwise disposed to electric phosphorescence, may render such matter radiant, after the manner of our own aurora borealis, under the influence of terrestrial electric streams. Or it may result from actual combustion going on in the higher regions of their atmospheres, the elements of which, so united, may be in a constant course of separation and restoration to their active state of mutual combustibility, by vital processes of extreme activity going on at their habitable surfaces, analogous to that by which vegetation on our earth separates carbonic acid (a product of combustion) into its elements, and so restores their combustibility. With specific hypotheses as to the cause of solar and sidereal light and heat, we have, however, no concern. It suffices that they must have a cause, and that this cause, inscrutable as it may be, does in several cases, and therefore may, in one more, determine the production of phenomena of the kind in question.'

Turning to that portion of the volume in which the observations of the solar spots are contained, we read that, during a part of 1836-7, a more than usual accumulation and disturbance took place in the spots on the surface of the great luminary. One of the spots, on

measurement, was found to occupy a space 'of nearly five square minutes. Now, a minute in linear dimension on the sun being 27,500 miles, and a square minute 756,000,000, we have here an area of 3,780,000,000 square miles included in one vast region of disturbance, and this requires to be increased for the effect of foreshortening. The black centre of the spot of May 25 would have allowed the globe of the earth to drop through it, leaving a thousand miles clear of contact on all sides of that tremendous gulf.' From January to March of 1837, numerous spots of most complex structure and character were formed in copious succession. During April and May the spots were fewer in number, and assumed generally a rounded appearance; in June and July they again increased; while we read that 'in August and October, so far as observed, the sun seemed to have passed into a quiescent state, the spots being few, small, and irregularly disposed.'

Sir John Herschel insists strongly upon a continuous and systematic observation of the solar spots, as the only means by which to explain the phenomena they present. 'We are naturally led to inquire for an efficient cause—for a *vis matrix*—to give rise to such enormous dynamical phenomena, for such they undoubtedly are. The efficient cause of fluctuations in our atmosphere, in terrestrial meteorology, is apparent enough; namely, external agency—the heating power of the sun. Without this, all would be tranquil enough; but in the solar meteorology we have no such extraneous source of alternate elevations and depressions of temperature, altering the specific gravity, and disturbing the equilibrium, of its atmospheric strata. The cause of such movements as we observe, and upon so immense a scale, must therefore reside within the sun itself; and it is there we must seek it.' Sir John proceeds to show that the rotation of the sun upon its own axis may be the chief cause, by producing currents of air in opposite directions, similar to our trade-winds, and with a density at the equator different from that at the poles. 'The spots, in this view of the subject,' he then pursues, 'would come to be assimilated to those regions on the earth's surface in which, for the moment, hurricanes and tornadoes prevail. The upper strata being temporarily carried downwards, displacing, by its impetus, the two strata of luminous matter beneath (which may be conceived as forming a habitually tranquil limit between the opposite, upper, and under currents), the upper of course to a greater extent than the lower; and thus wholly or partially denuding the opaque surface of the sun below. Such processes cannot be unaccompanied with vorticeous motions, which, left to themselves, die away by degrees, and dissipate; with this peculiarity, that their lower portions come to rest more speedily than their upper, by reason of the greater resistance below, as well as the remoteness from the point of action, which lies in a higher region, so that their centre (as seen in our water-spouts, which are nothing but small tornadoes) appears to retreat upwards. Now, this agrees perfectly with what is observed during the obliteration of the solar spots, which appear as if filled in by the collapse of their sides, the penumbra closing in upon the spot, and disappearing after it. . . . The spots are black; the penumbra a nearly uniform half-shadow, with, however, here and there undefinable definite spaces of a second depth of shade. There is no gradual melting of the one shade into the other—spot into penumbra, penumbra into full light. The idea conveyed is more that of the successive withdrawal of veils, the partial removal of definite films, than the melting away of a mist, or the mutual dilution of gaseous media. Films of immiscible liquids having a certain cohesion, floating on a dark or transparent ocean, and liable to temporary removal by winds, would rather seem suggested by the general tenor of the appearances, though they are far from being wholly explicable by this conception, at least if any considerable degree of transparency be allowed to the luminous matter.'

The sagacity of these views is only equalled by the

earnest philosophical spirit in which they are written. Such works as that just passed in review become landmarks for science, by which present and future discoverers may direct their steps. We feel much pleasure in making it known to a large circle of readers, who otherwise would never hear of its publication.

THE KING AND THE CONSUL.

It was the fortune of France, during the course of the eighteenth century, to be governed, at an interval of about ninety years, by two men who filled all Europe—shall we not rather say the world?—with their renown. One of these was Louis XIV., the descendant of a hundred kings, whose early promise of goodness was too quickly blighted by the baneful atmosphere of a brilliant and adulatory court; but who, amid his faults and errors, never ceased for a moment to be the courteous gentleman, as well as the despotic monarch. The other was Napoleon Bonaparte, who bore upon his brow the stamp of natural royalty, and who, by various qualities, won the hearts of his comrades in arms; but whose attempts at courtesy were as rare as they were unsuccessful. He found it easier to become an emperor than a gentleman; and this deficiency was felt by him more acutely than might have been expected from a man of his gigantic mind.

It was the singular fate of one woman, the Marquise de Créquy, to have been presented to both these great men, and to have been received by each of them with distinguished marks of attention. She has left behind her a brief sketch of these remarkable interviews, which we present to our readers, with the hope that it may prove interesting. Let us, however, say a few words first of the fair and distinguished writer.

Victoire de Froulay, Marquise de Créquy, was one of the most noble and witty, as well as one of the loveliest women of her day; and during the profligate reign of Louis XV., her life was so irreproachable, that the shaft of slander could find no arrow wherewith to wound her peace. At the age of ten or eleven, Victoire de Froulay accompanied her uncle, the Maréchal de Tessé, and her grandmother, the Marquise de Froulay, to St Cyr, where Mme de Maintenon was then staying; but we will give her own account of the visit.

'We stepped into the maréchal's carriage, and found ourselves on the road to St Cyr. At the end of a few minutes the equipage stops, and our laquais open the doors and let down the steps with precipitation. "It is the king," said my uncle, and we got out of the carriage leisurely; for the maréchal's people were too well trained not to have given ample notice of his majesty's approach. The king's carriage soon overtook us. It was drawn, as usual, by eight horses, and escorted by three *mousquetaires*, and as many light horse. There were two pages in front, and four behind, all of whom were clad in light-blue velvet, at that time the livery of France. Louis XIV. was alone in the carriage, and the moment he perceived us, the equipage and its escort stopped as by enchantment. His majesty let down the glass at our side, and saluted us with the most graceful courtesy. "That is the king, then," said I, with tears in my eyes—"the great king?" "You may add, the good, the unhappy king," replied the maréchal in a grave and melancholy tone.

'On arriving at St Cyr, we passed through a large apartment filled with the pages and attendants of his majesty, who was gone into the convent garden with the Bishop of Chartres and some other noblemen. Mme de Maintenon received us in a lofty chamber, wainscotted in oak, and singularly free from decorations of any kind. There were no paintings on the walls, neither was the floor of the apartment carpeted; but a small square of tapestry was placed before each of the chairs. Mme de Maintenon called me over to her, and fixing on me a look full of intelligence and sweetness, kissed me on the forehead. She then spoke to me of the high consideration in which she held my

family; and my grandmother rising soon afterwards to take leave of her, because the hour for the king's visit had arrived—"Stay, marquise, stay," said Mme de Maintenon in an earnest tone; and my grandmother readily yielded to her request.

"The monarch entered without any announcement, save that the folding-doors were all opened wide, and a gentleman-in-ordinary, who preceded his majesty by two or three minutes, approached Mme de Maintenon, making her a profound and silent obeisance, as is done to royal personages when their repast is ready. Mme de Maintenon advanced five or six steps to meet his majesty, who seemed to walk with difficulty, but nevertheless saluted her with the most graceful courtesy.

"Here is a young lady," she said, "whom I have taken the liberty to detain a while, that I might present her to the king. It is not needful that I should name her."

"I believe," replied the king, "that there is some sort of spiritual relationship* between this young lady and myself; but we are also relations after another fashion," added he, looking upon me as if he meant to congratulate me on the honour I enjoyed in being his cousin.

"I ask permission of the king that you may kiss his hand," said my grandmother with an air of solicitude, which had, however, no shade of obsequiousness about it.

"The king extended his hand with the palm downwards, as if he had presented it with the intention that I should kiss it; but a moment afterwards, he closed his hand quickly upon mine, which he deigned to press to his lips, and then he had the goodness—the exquisite politeness—or, if you will, the gallantry (for I know not how to designate his proceeding)—to place my hand gently by my side, and to detain it there long enough for me to understand that he did not choose me to offer him my intended homage."

The same mark of distinction which had been conferred upon Mme de Créquy by Louis XIV. as an act of gentle courtesy to a child, was rendered to her eighty-five years later by Napoleon Bonaparte, as a proof of respect and veneration. But before transcribing her account of this interview, we will relate her earliest impressions of Bonaparte, when she obtained a passing glimpse of him during his boyish days.

"It was the 31st December, in the year 1780. I had gone to pass a day at Elysée Marbeuf with my invalid friend, the Marquise de Marbeuf, and was sitting tête-à-tête with that dear woman, who was drinking apple-water incessantly, and talked of nothing but coughs and colds, tubercles and inflammations, until I was wearied to death with her conversation. The servant announced some lady, who was waiting in the antechamber, and had come to wish her a happy New-Year.

"May heaven bless her, and deliver me from her visit! Tell her that I have come out to Elysée on purpose to avoid company, because I do nothing but cough from morning to night. Why should she thus pursue me to Elysée? Have I never spoken to you of this Mme Bonne-ou Mal-aparté?"

"Malaparté you call her? I rather think it is Bonaparte." And then Mme de Marbeuf began telling me how her husband had become acquainted with this family while he was governor of Corsica, and that he had procured for the husband a situation in the customs, as they were very poor, although persons of good family.

"Being thoroughly wearied of my friend's society, I proposed that Mme Bonaparte should be admitted; and accordingly there was ushered in a fine-looking woman, with a legion of ill-dressed children. Amid this covey of unfledged Corsicans, there was a little boy, whose red eyes betrayed some recent vexation, and who was making a strong effort to gulp down his tears. By way of being civil, I inquired, in a kind tone, what was the matter with her son. "Madama," she replied, with a loud provincial voice, "*è un piti monstro!*"—"he is a little monster!"

* Her grandmother was the goddaughter of Louis XIV.

"Mme de Marbeuf looked quite distressed at the jargon of her visitor; but as it was rather amusing to me, I continued my inquiries until Mme Bonaparte related how she had taken her children to see the Bishop of Autun, and how this proud schoolboy had refused to kiss my lord bishop's hand, and how she had boxed his ears soundly as soon as they were outside the episcopal palace, by way of teaching him better manners for the future. "*Ma e oua testa de fer, madama!*"—"He has an iron head, madam!" Assuredly, I will not contradict the glorious mother of the citizen Bonaparte, now that the "*piti monstro*" is become the hero of St Roche and the Pont-tourant."

About twenty years had elapsed since Mme de Créquy's first meeting with the Bonaparte family—years of multiplied trials to her, and of ardent activity to the 'iron-headed boy,' whose proud spirit a maternal hand had vainly endeavoured to repress. Early in the nineteenth century, she dictates to her faithful secretary, Dupont, as follows:—

"Bonaparte had returned from Egypt, and was dwelling in the palace of our kings. Talleyrand was using all his address to draw the nobility into communication with the republican government. Many of them had solicited an audience of the First Consul, in order to obtain a restitution of their sequestered forests. My cousin and heir, the Baron de Breteuil, was very desirous that I should write to Bonaparte, and with infinite repugnance I consented to do so. It is impossible either to conceive or to express the painful effort it cost me to take this step."

"Two days afterwards, Colonel (I forget his name), aid-de-camp to the First Consul, was announced; and I beheld a tall fine young man, who, on entering my drawing-room, makes three profound bows, and tells me in a most respectful tone that the First Consul desires to see me, and requests my presence at the Tuileries on the ensuing day, at two in the afternoon. This summons perplexed me. I gave for answer that I was very aged and very feeble, but that, if possible, I would wait on the First Consul at the time appointed. Having applied to the Baron de Breteuil for his advice in this perplexing juncture, he counselled me by no means to neglect the invitation of the chief of the Republic, especially as he seemed willing to restore the confiscated forests. He added, that the Princesse de Gueménée had already presented herself to Bonaparte at his request, and that, after giving her a very polite reception, he had restored to her her forfeited lands. Let me confess that curiosity in some measure swayed my decision, and it was finally settled that I should wait on General Bonaparte.

"It was the 12th of November 1800, when I was carried in a sedan chair to the Tuileries. This poor castle seemed to me sadly dilapidated. The porters landed me at the entrance of the last saloon. (I must tell you that, for lack of dresses made according to the fashion of the day, I was habited in my usual costume; that is to say, in a petticoat and short pelisse of carmelite taffety, with a mantle and hood of the same material.) The "*Citoyenne Créquy*" was announced, and I found myself tête-à-tête with the conqueror of the Pyramids. He looked thoughtfully at me for a moment, and then addressing me in a kind manner, "I have wished to see you, Mme la Maréchale." But quickly assuming a more imperious tone, "I have desired to see you. Are you not a hundred years old?"

"Not quite, perhaps; but I am very near it."

* Extract of a note from Mme de Créquy, relative to the letter which she had consented to write to Bonaparte. "I will sign this letter, which I must not have the trouble to correct or to write. All the necessary formulas may be employed; but care must be taken not to use any expression which may convey the false idea of submission on my part; and I will not sign anything which can be at variance with sincerity or dignity of character. Therefore, let there be perfect politeness in the expressions, but no superfluous compliments. I ask for justice, not favour."

"How old are you precisely?"

"I could scarcely forbear laughing at such an interrogation, made in so imperative a form. "Sir," replied I, smiling—in such guise, alas! as one can smile at my age; and perhaps my smile was not even perceptible to him—"I cannot tell you precisely my age. I was born in a castle of La Maine."

"Ah, yes," said he, interrupting me brusquely; "in your time the civil registers were either badly kept, or else altogether neglected." And then he resumed his interrogatories in a magisterial tone. "Where do you live?"

"In the Hôtel de Créquy."

"Ah diable! And in what quarter?"

"I could not understand this fancy to know where I resided; but am told that it is a sort of curiosity which he feels with regard to all those who approach him. It also perplexed me to know wherefore he addressed me as *Mme la Maréchale*; but on learning that he had bestowed equally inappropriate titles on other people, it occurs to me that he wishes perhaps to create an illusion to himself as to the date, origin, and nature of his consular authority. On learning that I resided in the Rue de Grenoble—

"Rue de Grenoble! There was a tumult in your quarter yesterday. Were you frightened? It was on account of the price of bread."

"The rioters were not numerous, and I did not trouble myself about the matter."

"There can be no disturbances under my government; no serious ones at least! There may be an uproar now and then; but France is not the less happy and contented. Don't let people deceive themselves; a little clamour is no proof of dissatisfaction among the people. Happiness does not go about and make a noise in the streets; a few restless spirits make a vast commotion. Is it not so?"

"Oh, assuredly; three women who set about screaming, make more noise than three thousand men who hold their peace."

"What you say, then, is very good; very good indeed, do you know?"

"And I answered him quite simply, as Colinet would have done at court, "You are very kind, sir!"

"The weather being dark and showery, with gusts of cold wind, "I am sorry to have made you come out to-day," said he, smiling; "the weather is arbitrary," laying an accent on the last word. "We see a relative of yours frequently."

"Who can that be?" I inquired with an air of surprise, and in as familiar a tone as that which he used. He replied it was *Mme de Mirande*. "I did not know we were relations! I am the Duchess of Miranda in Spain, and this perhaps has occasioned her mistake." But the First Consul looked so annoyed at the deception, that I was sorry to have said so much; for in truth I did not wish this gasconne any harm.

"You have seen Louis XIV.?" continued he in an elevated tone; "have you also seen Peter the Great, *Mme la Maréchale*?"

"I have not had that honour, for I was in my province when—"

"I know that you were intimate with Cardinal de Fleury; is it true that he expected to obtain the imperial crown for Louis XV.? Had Louis any chance of being emperor?"

"It was believed, general, that his success was certain, but for the bad faith of Frederick, king of Prussia, whose treachery Fleury never forgave."

"Frederick was cleverer than Fleury, but not more astute: old Fleury was a cunning one. Have you suffered much from the Revolution?" he inquired dryly.

"Believing he would be glad to escape a long list of grievances, I mentioned my losses as briefly as possible; alluding especially to the forests of Versailles and St Pol, and the wood of Valenciennes. His answer was vague; for he evidently responded to his own thoughts rather than to my words. "Madame, the desire to do

good in a time of revolution is like writing, upon the sand by the sea-shore; what is spared by the winds is effaced by the waves." After a moment's pause, he inquired, "Did you know Dubois and Cartouche?"

"Instead of answering a word, I looked at him with so severe an expression, that it surprises me now to think upon it. Most probably he became sensible of the impropriety of having summoned the Dowager Marquise de Créquy into his presence for the sake of asking news about Cartouche; and he smiled so naively, that I felt at once disarmed."

"Allow me, madame," said he, "to kiss your hand."

"I began to pull off my mitten as hastily as the occasion required. "Leave on your glove, my good mother," added he with an air of respectful solicitude; and then he pressed my poor decrepit centenary fingers firmly to his lips. He granted me the restitution of our forests with the best grace imaginable; and then spoke of the noble conduct of the Duke de Créquy Lesdiguières at Rome, adding, that France was wrong in allowing the destruction of this pyramid, which testified the reparation offered by Rome to her ambassador."

"Alas! what avails me this noble name of Créquy, which I shall be the last to bear; and which must very shortly be noted down for the last time in a dirty register, among the names of an undistinguished multitude!"

"I have remarked in the character and conduct of Bonaparte many things which are abhorrent to me, one thing that perplexes me, and one that I approve of. It is needless to enumerate the causes of my dislike; but the motive of my approbation consists in his unconquerable perseverance. He never retreats before any opposition; and in great affairs, as well as in little ones, he who is the most resolute will infallibly succeed. As for the matter which perplexes me, if Bonaparte be indeed desirous to reign over France, the enigma may be partly solved—Wherefore does he seek so earnestly to win over to his interest the high nobility of France, who never can be of any service to him? Heirs of their unworthy sires, most of our young nobility have been educated without piety, and too early plunged into the corrupting vortex of the world: an enervated and degenerate race, they are unfit to govern. Wherefore, among the nobles who have distinguished themselves during the Revolution by ability or self-devotion, has there not been found even one of our grand seigneurs? Wherefore have they made themselves remarkable only by their disloyalty or their want of intelligence?"

"I believe that the impiety and profligacy of the Regency, and of the closing years of Louis XV., have produced the dissolution of society in France; and that our country needed to be purified in a bath of her own blood. I believe that Bonaparte has been raised up to exterminate the assassins, and to dissipate revolutionary illusions. I think it very probable that his head may be turned by success; and perhaps this man of victory may so far forget the mission he has received, that his ambition may be severely chastised. Laurels are a perfect symbol; they yield shade, and nothing more."

THE MIDNIGHT JOURNEY.

BY LEITCH RITCHIE.

I HAVE lived a very wandering life. When quite a boy, I was taken from school to be consigned to the care of a near kinsman in the West Indies. In two years this gentleman died insolvent, and I tried successively several of the greater islands without finding a permanent place for my foot. I next found my way to the Spanish main, but in the company of loose and daring speculators, rather than in the regular mercantile employment for which I had been intended; and several years were passed in a course of adventure and vicissitude, many portions of which would seem too wildly improbable for romance. In the other division of the new world, I was carried by my wandering destiny along the whole of the Mexican range of coast, and passed nearly two years

in California. In the course of this time I visited several of the islands both in the North and South Pacific, and at a subsequent period hunted the sea otter, with a crew composed chiefly of Aleutian savages, in the ocean that separates Asiatic from American Russia.

All this had done nothing for me in the way of fortune. Indeed I cannot be said to have ever thought seriously of the future. Like the wild companions among whom my lot had been cast, I was satisfied with the bounties of the passing hour; spending gaily, whenever we had opportunity, the money earned at the constant risk of life and limb. But at length a circumstance occurred which made me think. When poring one day over an old newspaper in the cabin of an English ship, I observed with a surprise and incredulity—at first manifested by a fit of laughter—that the world had not altogether forgotten the poor, friendless, reckless adventurer of the Pacific. A series of unexpected deaths, as it appeared, had taken place; and the boy who had been shipped away at such early years from his home and country, in the hope of securing for him in the new world a provision, which in the old could only be the result, if it ever came at all, of the struggles of years, was now the heir of an independent property!

These particulars have nothing to do with an adventure (if it can be called an adventure) which I fell in with immediately on my return to England, and which I now sit down to sketch for the amusement of my new friends. But I give them in order to account for the wildness of certain hallucinations which beset me, and which would otherwise be considered merely an instance of bad taste, rather than traced to a habit of mind engendered by the extraordinary scenes that had formed my every-day life since the days of boyhood. Even the long homeward voyage had no effect in tranquillising my nerves; for it was a voyage of storm and other disaster, including hunger, and its frequent concomitant, mutiny. When at length the white cliffs of my country rose upon the horizon, steeped in the mellowed sunlight of these temperate latitudes, I felt an unaccustomed yearning after repose. My unquiet bosom grew calm; my wild eyes filled with tears; and I called upon the winds to swell our lagging canvas, that I might flee away and be at rest.

What a contrast was my life now about to present! What a novelty was even the physical aspect of the country about to disclose to my eyes! How should I fall in with the measured tread of that calm and orderly population of which I was to form a unit? How could I even walk steadily upon the level roads and smooth fields that awaited me? Presently, as these inquiries crowded into my mind, there mingled with my new-born longings after rest a kind of misgiving that I was not fitted for its enjoyment; and as the night began to close dark and heavy around while we were nearing the coast, I felt almost happy in the idea that another day was to dawn before I should enter upon my new course of tame, quiet, methodical, prosaic existence.

But this interval was not destined to occur. As lights rose here and there upon the dark mass before us, in clustering groups, long lines, or solitary stars, they kindled my excitement. The voices of the land called me from a hundred points, and my heart answered to the hail. It seemed an *adventure* to plunge into that world of shadows, studded with so many gems that sparkled without illumining; and in the morning, it would be an amusement to observe into what common forms the phantasmagoria of my imagination had resolved. A conveyance, I was told by the revenue officers who boarded us, would set out in two or three hours from a neighbouring town, towards the distant part of the country which was my destination; and I suddenly determined to go on shore, and make as much progress on my journey as I could accomplish in the night.

On landing, I could form no distinct idea of the character of the country, for my vision was unable to penetrate more than a few yards around me. These few yards, however, were tame and civilised, just as I had

expected; and being informed at the Customs' station that I should find the road good and direct towards the next town, I at once shouldered my knapsack—for my worldly goods were then packed in small compass—and set out on the few miles' walk. The wind was against me, and felt keener and colder than I had known it under the tropics; and by and by it came on to rain, and the drops dashed in my face as if they would have cut the skin. Altogether, my walk was somewhat uncomfortable; and although it was impossible to wander from a narrow road that was bounded on both sides by a thick hedge, blinded as I was by the rain, and confused by the gust, I found the way a little longer than I expected.

I at length reached the town. The streets were already deserted; not a sound was heard but the wind moaning through them; and as I passed between rows of lamps, of what seemed to me an unearthly brilliance, I could have supposed that I had entered some dead city of enchantment. After wandering on for a considerable distance, I at length reached an open door of what proved to be a house of entertainment; and having signified to the people what I wanted, and whither I was going, and desired to be called in time for the conveyance, I sat down to a substantial and not unwelcome meal. This was indeed rest. I was alone in the room: the house, like the street, was profoundly silent; and as the servant-woman glided in and out to attend to my requirements, she seemed afraid to disturb by voice or footfall the repose of the scene. She at length left me, signifying that I should be called 'in time to start;' and while mechanically satisfying my appetite, I gave full reins to my excursive imagination.

It was still cold, although not late in the autumn; and in order to restore the circulation to my limbs, I drank a little spirits and water. This circumstance would not be worth mentioning; but my habits being strictly temperate, I am inclined to *hope* that I may thus in some measure account for a state of mind which I should be loath to describe as delirium. However this may be, I either fell asleep after supper, or into that trance-like reverie which can hardly be distinguished from a dream. I was still roaming by the cliffs of the Pacific, through the primeval forests of America, amid the breakers of Behring's Sea. I was still searching for gold (which had at one time been my occupation) among the mountains of the south-west, and listening to the wild legends of the place, as I paused at the opening of some tomb-like cavern, said by the natives to communicate, through the bowels of the earth, with lands beyond the ocean. But my reverie had not the effect of reality. I knew at the time that it was my imagination that thought, while my judgment watched its aimless gambols with a sense of languid amusement. Ever and anon, however, England mingled in my dream. From each loftier cliff, from the summit of each wilder wave, I saw spread out in the distant sea its green and level fields, bathed in the pale sunlight of the north, and slowly traversed with methodical steps by an industrious and orderly population.

I was at length suddenly awakened from my trance by the noise of heavy footsteps, clanging doors, and calling voices; but so imperfectly awakened, that I have only a confused recollection of having been told that it was time to set out on my journey, of being flooded along the street in a hurrying crowd, and of having paid, in the midst of a scene of tumult, some money, which I understood was to be the price of my transport. I may have been partly asleep, and partly under the influence of the unaccustomed glass of spirits and water; yet, after all, this confusion of mind is perhaps not very surprising in a stranger from the wilds of the Pacific set suddenly down in the heart of a distant country, and in the midst of an entirely new form of society. But mark the sequel.

I was hardly seated in the public vehicle, when it rolled off, leaving the tumult behind in an instant. A female, in the corner opposite to mine, was the only

other passenger; and by the light of a lamp which we passed now and then in the earlier part of the journey, I saw that she was young and fair, but pale, cold, mute, and passionless as a statue. Not a trace of excitement caught from the hurry and the crowd, or the romance of a midnight journey, was on that marble brow, or in those lovely but soulless eyes. They were fixed on mine, as her head leant back, with a look which confounded me by its utter want of human sympathy; and then, having wandered for an instant over my foreign garb, and my knapsack, which lay on the seat beside me, they withdrew so coldly and lifelessly, that when a hand was protruded from her cloak, to arrange with listless motions its folds about her neck, and exhibited not one trace of blood in its long, tapering fingers, that gleamed like snow in the darkness, I could have supposed her to be some preternatural being in whose custody I was travelling! There was no amusement without. We seemed to be journeying between two shadows, the denser being the earth, and the rarer the heavens; and again and again I turned to look at my companion. Sometimes, though rarely, I met the dead eyes as before; but at length they closed, and she was all statue.

The form of the denser shadow without now began to change, being half disclosed by a pale gleam from above, which seemed to indicate the quarter of the sky where the moon lay under her pall of clouds. The shadow grew loftier and more rugged, and then appeared to come out in cliffs and heights. These presently began to close in upon our path; and the sound of our rushing wheels, before partially lost in the surrounding atmosphere, was converted, by the interruption, into groans and screams. On flew the vehicle, shrieking as it flew, and answered by the thousand voices of the rocks, as they gathered closer and closer, till they seemed to totter over our heads. Nor was this idea so absurd as you may suppose; for as I thrust my head in alarm out of the window, there was a yawning gulf before us, into which we were obviously hurrying.

Was I still in the midst of my dream? Was this the Gold-seeker's cave, through which my 'extravagant and erring spirit' was to be transported beneath the foundations of the sea? I had hardly time to ask myself the question, ere the screams and groans of the vehicle, becoming more agonised every instant, were broken by an unearthly yell, which quivered in the ear for more than a minute, and then, with a rush and a roar, received with a sound of mingled laughter and sobbing, we plunged madly into the abyss.

Onward—onward—onward we flew, through as dark and wild a cavern as ever disclosed to modern men the extinct races of an earlier world. Sometimes a red and momentary gleam illumined, I knew not whence, our lonely path, and I saw the face of the living rock overhead jagged with stalactites, and its rugged sides dripping with water. On these occasions I turned a look of intense curiosity upon my companion. Sometimes her eyes were open, sometimes shut; but her manner remained as listless and impassive as ever. Sometimes her glance met mine, but it betrayed no trace of human emotion. She appeared to look on me as a portion of the material things before her, with which she claimed, and could feel, no sympathy. Sometimes her eye wandered to the window; but after a single glance, it returned as cold and unmoved as before. It was the same thing to her whether we were above or below the earth, whether we were flying upon the clouds or digging beneath the foundations of the sea; it made no change in her listless manner or reclining posture: she remained as cold, and pale, and mute, and passionless, and fair as ever.

How long this subterranean course went on I cannot say. I lost account of time. We had set out from the mountains of Mexico, and for aught I knew, we were now beneath the Pacific, and destined to rise in the deserts of Australia. In fact, the old world and the

new were so strangely jumbled in my imagination, that I could not have determined, with any feeling of certainty, in which quarter of the globe our journey lay. All on a sudden, a wan, spectral light broke into the cave, and but for the wild absurdity of the supposition, I could have really supposed that I caught a glimpse of the moon emerging from her pall of clouds. This I knew to be impossible, although the other details of the scene were so terribly real, that I was sometimes fully persuaded I was awake! On, however, we rushed, in utter darkness as before, and for so long a time, that, worn out and stupefied by the over-excitement, it was with a feeling of little more than languid curiosity I saw—not by the approach of light, but rather by a steady change in the darkness—that we neared the end of our subterranean career, and were at length vomited forth into the upper world.

I beheld nothing distinctly for several minutes. My companion was asleep, or at least motionless; and, as if controlled by some strange fascination, I felt my own eyes growing heavy; when, all on a sudden, the moon burst forth, and lighted up a scene of such surpassing splendour, that I uttered an involuntary cry of admiration. We were in a deep glen, or rather gorge, the sides of which appeared to be formed of majestic cliffs of white marble, hung here and there with a drapery of woods. The summits were inconceivably various in their outlines: sometimes representing castles and towers; sometimes battlemented steepes; sometimes fringes of tall trees, that held up their finger-like branches between us and the moonlight. In the distance, the ravine, at a place where it sunk sheer down from the base of a lofty mountain, was spanned by an aerial bridge, that appeared to me like a path by which the sons of God might have descended to visit the daughters of men. My cry had aroused the female statue, and she even raised her head for an instant; but there was nothing unnatural to her in this spectral show, and in another moment she leant back in the carriage, although I could see her strange eyes gleaming upon me for some time through the gloom.

Onward we rushed through the gorge, now plunging into solemn woods, and now skimming along the extreme edge of steepes, from which I could see, through the tops of tangled trees, the gleam of a torrent far below. But presently, as we appeared to be issuing through the narrow portal of the ravine into a more open country, the moon was again hidden, and a thicker shadow than before descended upon our path. At this moment I received an impression which I shall long remember, for its remarkable consistency with the scene. My eyes were attracted to the opposite window of our headlong vehicle by a sudden and momentary gleam of red light, accompanied by a sound like the sweep of a tempest, and—smile if you will at the superstition!—I beheld a crowd of spectral faces glaring in upon us for an instant, and then vanishing in the night.

After our egress from the enchanted valley, we appeared to descend gradually, but without diminishing our speed. It was too dark for any distinct observation of the nature of the country; but the air felt thick, chill, and damp, and it was obvious that we were gaining an extremely low level, with perhaps a marshy soil. But at length the struggling moon was able to throw a wan light upon the scene, and I saw that we were either crossing the sea, or traversing a flooded district. Water was around us as far as the eye could reach, studded here and there with small islands, each bearing a hut, a rick of corn, or a few solitary trees, in the midst of which we continued our career without appearing to disturb the slumbrous wave by our rushing wheels. It seemed as if we skimmed along the surface of the liquid expanse without touching it. At this part of the journey, the marble fingers again stole out, to draw closer the drapery about the marble chin: my companion apparently felt the chillness of the air, but it gave her no further trouble to find herself out of sight of the mainland.

Not the least extraordinary circumstance attending this extraordinary journey, was the rapidity of transition from one level and from one character of scenery to another, without our receiving any distinct impressions from the act of climbing or descending. It may be, however, that the monotony of the water-course lulled my over-excited senses into a temporary oblivion; but at any rate, the next change I perceived was the moon completely free from the imprisoning clouds, and her faint beams struggling with the first rays of the dawn. We were now rushing through a wild and rugged country, evidently of considerable elevation, with here and there the adjuncts of wood and water giving variety and interest to the scene. Suddenly, however, as I leant out of the window to refresh my fevered brow with the morning air, I could perceive, by an appearance in the misty distance, that our journey was in all probability drawing to a close. A deep valley, if it would not rather prove to be a chasm in the mountains, extended at right angles with our course; and in order to pursue our career, it would now be necessary, instead of running, as we had hitherto done, pretty nearly as the crow flies, either to turn sharply away, or fling ourselves headlong over the steep.

It was with intense interest I watched the event; which became more and more puzzling, as I saw that there was no mass of houses giving indication of our having reached the goal. To turn away along the brink of the valley, would be contrary to the whole scheme of our journey; and as we approached nearer and nearer, it was obvious that to plunge into that gulf of tumbling shadows, on which the gray light of the dawn had as yet but little influence, was entirely out of the question. My agitation appeared to arouse in some measure even my strange companion; at least he leant languidly forward to give a single glance out of the window, and then returned to her marble repose.

How I wished that I could see more clearly!—but perhaps the wish was imprudent. Nearer and nearer we came to the edge of the chasm; deeper and more sudden appeared the precipice to fling itself into the misty gloom; swifter and wilder flew the wheels of the desperate vehicle: we are at hand; we are on the brink: my eyes closed—but not till I had seen that we were no longer on the firm earth. We had darted out into space, like an arrow from the bow. We had swerved neither to the right nor the left, neither upwards nor downwards. We had scorned the depths of the valley, just as we had laughed at the impediments of cliff and mountain; and now we appeared to be skimming through the air, with the same indomitable will, the same headlong impulse, with which we had thundered through the living rock!

The first edge of the sun arose as we flew, and the shadows of the valley disappeared. A beautiful and fertile plain stretched far beneath us both to right and left, diversified by woods and waters, farms and cottages, fields and gardens; and here and there we could see men and women, horses and oxen, coming forth to their daily employment. We were nothing to them. We did not belong to their world. A face may have been turned up for an instant, a finger extended; but the peasant returned the next moment to his cheerful toil, without a thought of whence we had come or whither we were going.

We had left this scene long behind before my bewildered senses revived; but at length I was aroused by the stopping of the vehicle, and I found myself suddenly in the midst of a crowd and bustle similar to that which I had witnessed at our departure. The mysterious female at once started into life. Her manner thawed; her complexion lost its marbly tint, and became human; and her beautiful face was lighted up with smiles.

'Give your ticket!' said she, teaching me by her example, as a functionary came to the door.

'What is this?' said I. 'Was it all real? Where have we been? How have we come?'

'I see,' replied she, smiling, 'you are a foreigner, and do not take well to the rail. It is very dull and stupid, I must needs confess, but I usually manage to sleep a little. However, I shall not find it quite so tame to-morrow when returning in daylight.'

'You return to-morrow?'

'Yes; I have only come down to dine to-day with some friends, who have made up a little party for a trip to America to see the Falls.'

'You do not go with them?'

'Alas, no! I am such a weak creature—so childishly nervous; and they say Niagara is so odd! In your country, too, I daresay there are wonderful sights, and strange adventures, and all sorts of things to keep one awake. Here we only spin cotton! Good-morning.' And with a kindly smile, and a graceful bend, the young lady tripped away, and was lost among the crowd.

Such was my first journey after my return to England; and it served to dissipate many delusions. I found every-day life a poem, a romance, compared with which the adventures of the Pacific are tame and commonplace. Even the cotton manufactories, so disdainfully referred to by my fellow-traveller, present scenes unparalleled for wonder and excitement, danger and hairbreadth 'escapes. But the magic with which my countrymen are surrounded is *their own*. A tunnel through a mountain, or a viaduct across a valley, is no marvel to them, because they know the amount and kind of labour which produced it, and the sum of money it cost. For my part, my impressions are as yet free from such associations, and I still walk about like a man in a dream. I went abroad in search of fortune, and found only danger and toil; I returned home for repose, and find nothing but headlong hurry and wild excitement. Science has changed the face of the world; and I am as a man called up by enchantment from the sleep of ages to find himself a stranger upon the earth.

MAN AND WIFE.

A TALE.

BY ANNA MARIA SARGEANT.

'You wish to delay your decision until you have had an opportunity of further consulting your wife, I presume?' This observation was addressed by a house agent to a young tradesman with whom he had for some time past been in treaty respecting the lease of a shop.

'Consult my wife!' repeated Bradshaw in a tone indicative of surprise and indignation. 'No; I would never consult a woman upon a matter of business.'

'Oh, I beg your pardon,' hastily rejoined the wary house agent, secretly rejoicing at having at length discovered the weak side of the man he was dealing with; 'but I thought you might possibly like Mrs Bradshaw to see the house. I know the ladies like to have a voice in such matters.'

'I tell you I don't ask her advice in *any* matter,' the young man sharply retorted; 'and to prove to you, Mr Hutchingson, that I don't boast of an independence I do not really possess, I'll strike the bargain at once.'

The house agent had previously tried all the usual methods of drawing the business to a close. He had assured him that his rival draper, Mr Dawkins, had been after it, and that several other persons were eager to have it. These, however, had failed. Bradshaw still had scruples regarding the prudence of the affair; for the rent and taxes were exorbitant, and the terms of the lease far from favourable; but no sooner was it hinted that he was waiting for his wife's consent, than Hutchingson's end, as he had acutely perceived would be the case, was accomplished.

Now, it must not be inferred, from the above-related conversation, that Mr Peter Bradshaw was a domestic tyrant: he was willing to allow his wife all the home comforts his means would afford, and his manner towards her was not often unkind; but then she must never dare to express an opinion on any subject—the

preparation of the dishes for his table, or the dress of his children excepted. We sometimes hear mention made of individuals who have but two ideas, and this is surely a poor allowance. Unhappily, Mr Bradshaw had but one; and that one was—that it was beneath the dignity of a man to take the counsel of a woman. His notions of the mental superiority of 'the lords of the creation' were so towering, that he looked down upon his gentle spouse with feelings bordering on contempt, and consequently treated her as he would an upper servant, whose office it was to administer to his domestic comfort. He on his part thought he was discharging his sole duty by finding her the means to supply a liberal table and suitable apparel, and by treating her with negative kindness.

'Well, Martha, I've taken that shop in Market Street,' the husband exclaimed on returning home; and as he spoke, he threw himself at full length (which, to own the truth, did not far exceed five feet, notwithstanding his exalted idea of himself) upon the couch in his little back parlour.

'What shop, my dear?' Mrs Bradshaw asked in surprise.

'Why, the new shop opposite the market-place. Didn't I tell you I thought of taking it?'

'No, Peter; you once said that you had looked at it, and asked the rent, but it appeared much too high for our means.'

'I am going to try it at all events,' the husband rejoined a little tartly, for he was not pleased with her vague allusion to the imprudence of which his conscience accused him of having been guilty. 'There is nothing to be done now-a-days without a great show; and I think I have stayed in this dull street long enough.'

'This shop has afforded us a comfortable maintenance for seven years, my dear,' the wife quietly observed.

'The change will be for your benefit, Martha,' Mr Bradshaw interposed; 'you will have the use of three or four additional rooms, and large ones, instead of these little pigeon-holes, so I don't see that you will have any reason to complain.'

'I am not complaining, Peter,' she returned; 'I am only fearful that you will find it difficult to meet the expenses from your profits; besides which, we must, you know, have this house on our hands three years longer.'

'I shall easily find a tenant,' he carelessly replied; adding, 'and I have taken the other for twenty-one years.'

'Twenty-one years!' exclaimed the wife in astonishment and alarm; but seeing that the gathering storm was about to break, she dared not add more.

When some persons have done that which their consciences decide to be wrong, they not unfrequently have recourse to a fit of passion, as the only means of silencing the remonstrances of those who have most cause to complain; and to this refuge Mr Bradshaw fled, knowing that he had no arguments to trust to. His wife being too gentle to resist, and too wise for strife, suffered it to have its vent without a word of retort. Thus it shortly subsided into a calm.

Another month found the family settled in their new abode; and the usual methods of advertising informed 'Mr Bradshaw's friends and the public that he had removed from No. 7 Church Street, to 50 Market Street, where he hoped, by offering the best articles at a very moderate price, to merit their continued patronage and support; but notwithstanding this announcement, the expected influx of customers did not follow, at least in proportion to the additional expenditure of the shop-keeper, and his spirits consequently fell.

'Martha, my dear,' he one day said, addressing his wife a few weeks subsequent to the period at which the change took place, 'I am convinced that my want of success here is wholly owing to the small capital I have, so I have been thinking of taking a partner into my concern.'

'You must be cautious whom you trust, my dear Peter,' Mrs Bradshaw quietly remarked.

'Oh, I have taken care to be on the right side,' her husband answered. 'I have made a bargain which cannot be otherwise than for my benefit.'

'Then you have already settled the affair!' cried the wife in surprise. 'I thought you implied that you had it only in contemplation. Pray who may it be that you have made this arrangement with?'

'With the son of my father's old friend, Smithson. The old man is anxious to associate his son with some steady man of business, and is willing to put a thousand pounds into the concern, which will be an excellent thing to stock my new shop, and will enable me to extend my connection.'

'A thousand pounds will, I think, be a poor recompense for having a young man of George Smithson's habits as a partner in your business,' Mrs Bradshaw observed. 'It is not often that I interfere in such matters,' she pursued; 'but if you take my advice, Peter, you will have nothing to do with him.'

'And why not, pray?' her husband sharply asked. 'I have known the father these twenty years, and his character has always stood high for integrity.'

'That may be; but it does not follow that the son will not bring you into trouble. You know he has caused his father a great deal of unhappiness by his imprudence and extravagance; and it appears to me to be like rushing into ruin with your eyes open to have any connection with him.'

'You are too severe upon the young man, Martha,' Mr Bradshaw interposed, with an inflection of voice which indicated that his judgment was more than half convinced by her argument. 'He has been a little extravagant in his youth; but now he has sowed his wild oats, his father hopes he will settle down into more steady habits.'

'It is quite natural that the father should hope so; but not that you, my dear Peter, should depend on such slender foundations in a matter which may be so very serious. My own observation,' she added, 'has led me to remark that a disobedient, extravagant youth, seldom makes a steady, persevering man.'

'Oh, you always look on the dark side of the picture, Martha; you are always prognosticating evil. For my part, I like to hope the best.' This speech was accompanied with one or two of those nervous movements which often attend unsound arguments; but Mrs Bradshaw, who was really much concerned at the new step of imprudence her husband was about to take, thought it right to be more than usually tenacious in maintaining her ground. All, however, was vain. 'Pshaw—stuff!' muttered Mr Bradshaw. It was all he could say, for he had not even a lame leg to stand upon.

Mr Peter Bradshaw's once small and comparatively unpretending concern now assumed the more substantial appellation of a *firm*, though it had really less ground for so doing; and fresh placards and advertisements announced 'that Messrs Bradshaw and Smithson would now be able to offer the public goods of superior quality at a before unheard-of price.' But neither the plate-glass, the puffing, nor the partner, had the desired effect of enticing fresh people to inspect the wares; and many of those who had been regular customers at the late shop in Church Street discontinued dealing, thinking that, in order to make so much show, the articles must really be inferior. To add to Mr Bradshaw's distress, the house he had before occupied did not let, nor did it seem likely to do so till the lease had expired, owing to its being in want of a thorough repair.

Just at this period the attention of the family was called to an affair of a different nature. Mr Bradshaw's eldest brother had died some years previously, and made him his executor, and also the guardian of his only daughter. The interest of the money was to be appropriated to the young lady's board and education till she became of age, when it was to be at her own

disposal. Miss Caroline Bradshaw had been brought up at a boarding-school in the suburbs of London, and remained there after her education was deemed finished, till within a few months of the expiration of her minority, at which time it was proposed by her uncle that she should take up her residence in his house. As his fair ward had, in addition to a pretty face, the attraction of fifteen hundred pounds, Mr Bradshaw had, during those few months, several overtures for her hand; but, to the dismay of the rival candidates, it was at length discovered that Mr George Smithson, who was amongst the number, was the favoured individual. This circumstance caused Mrs Bradshaw considerable uneasiness. Unhappily for her own prospects, she had no reason to alter the opinion she had formed concerning the young man. She foresaw that poverty and misery must be the termination of the career he was pursuing, and she trembled lest her niece should be involved in the ruin he was bringing upon himself, and she feared on them also. She made several appeals to her husband, begging him, as he valued the happiness of his brother's child, to warn her of the precipice on which she stood; but he was deaf to her pleadings. 'Caroline is old enough to choose a husband for herself, and I shan't interfere in the matter,' he on one occasion angrily returned. 'I would not certainly have any hand in making up the match, because people might say that I wanted to keep her money in my own hands for the use of the firm; but she shall certainly do as she pleases.' The wife had next recourse to arguments with the young lady herself; but Miss Caroline thought her own judgment superior in such matters to that of her good aunt. Mrs Bradshaw then tried to delay a union which she could not prevent. She represented to her husband that if he withheld his consent for twelve months, he would by that time see how the young man conducted himself in the connection he had already formed with the family, and thus have a better opportunity of judging whether there was any prospect of happiness for his niece. Poor Mr Bradshaw's prejudices concerning the superior judgment of his own sex came again into full play. He was angry at what he termed his wife's perversity in groundless apprehensions, and persisted in saying he should let the young people follow their own course. The result was, that Miss Caroline Bradshaw became Mrs Smithson on the very day that she attained her majority.

The young couple had arranged, though without the consent, or even the knowledge, of Mr Bradshaw, to invest the greater part of the bride's fortune in establishing a business in London. The fact was, that Smithson was not at all pleased with the subordinate position he held in the firm. He wanted to have the entire management; and, above all, that the money should pass through his hands, which Mr Bradshaw had hitherto wisely prevented. A proposal to spend the honeymoon in town did not awaken surprise or suspicion; but this was the preparatory step for the plan being put into execution.

Three weeks after his niece's marriage, Mr Bradshaw received a letter from his young partner, stating that he had just had the offer of a dashing shop in Regent Street on very advantageous terms; that they wished, therefore, to take up their residence in London, instead of returning to B—; and that, in the event of Mr Bradshaw approving of the arrangement, he and his beloved Caroline were quite willing that the profits of the concern should be equally shared with their dear uncle. All he desired was, he said, to have the superintendence of the London business left wholly to himself. Mrs Bradshaw, with her customary penetration, perceived that this was likely to involve them in still greater trouble. She foresaw that it would enable Smithson to make what use he pleased of his partner's name; and now that he was removed from under their eye, it was likely that he would become more improvident and reckless than ever. She again ventured to expostulate with her husband, representing

how much better it would be to dissolve the firm at once, and thus save himself from absolute ruin. Had this advice come from any other quarter, it is probable that Mr Bradshaw would have seen and acknowledged its wisdom. Indeed, as it was, he had his misgivings; but the fact of its being urged by his wife, was a sufficient reason why he should pursue a contrary course. The result was, that at the expiration of a few months, the names of Bradshaw and Smithson appeared in the Gazette amongst the list of bankrupts; and a very inconsiderable dividend had they to offer, for Smithson had given bills upon the credit of the firm to a large amount, having in the meantime launched out into expenses which a capital of five thousand, instead of fifteen hundred pounds, would scarcely justify. Nor was this all. He had, during his residence in London, formed connections with several dissolute young men, who, being, like himself, in want of sufficient means to gratify their extravagant desires, occasionally had recourse to fraudulent acts in order to supply those means. This was discovered just at the time his commercial affairs were finally settled; and the consequence was, that he was obliged to fly the country, leaving his unhappy wife in a most destitute and hopeless condition.

Poor Mr Bradshaw was in a state bordering on insanity. His naturally weak mind sunk under an accumulated load of sufferings, which, in spite of his inordinate self-esteem, he could not but feel had been brought on by his own want of prudent forethought. He was really distressed beyond measure at the contemplation of the misery in which it had involved his gentle wife and innocent children; his niece's distress, too, and consequent illness, gave additional poignancy to the stroke. He could not but feel that he had not fulfilled the part of a father or guardian towards her; and that her premature death, or the horrors of her future life, would be alike owing to this fact. Mrs Bradshaw was the only person capable of action, and she in this emergency displayed an energy of character which was little expected, but which could alone be of any avail in saving her family from a total wreck. Her kind and judicious treatment of the unhappy young wife restored her, in a short space of time, to some measure of health; and her prudent counsel then induced her to make an effort for self-support, by means of the education which she had received. The task of soothing the irritated feelings, and calming the perturbed spirit of her husband, was less easy; yet this she in time had the happiness of accomplishing. She did not, it must be told, do it by vaunting her superior judgment and forethought, and taxing him with being the cause of all the evils which had befallen them. She did not even vaguely allude to his folly, or to her having foretold the event. She merely endeavoured to show him that, however unprosperous his circumstances might be, her affection was unchanged, and her desire to share his fortunes unabated. She bore his petulance with calmness, and his only half-subdued pride with patience, trying to soften the rigour of their present situation, and selecting opportunities for offering wholesome advice, and forming judicious plans for the future. Though weak-minded and imprudent in the extreme, Bradshaw was not an unprincipled man. Notwithstanding the late unhappy affair, his character for integrity was not impeached. Mrs Bradshaw, therefore, advised that they should return to their late residence in Church Street, which was still untenanted, and recommence business on a small scale, trusting to the generosity of their former customers for a renewal of their favours. She went on to say that she would cheerfully confine the household expenditure within the limits of their profits, whatever they might be; and not only so, but proposed, if possible, laying aside some portion of those profits for the purpose of paying at least a part of the debts they had themselves incurred. Bradshaw listened, for the first time in his life, with something like complacency to this prudent counsel. He was too well satisfied with

the plan to raise even an objection; and though his pride would not allow him to acknowledge it, he was really much pleased with the part she had taken in the whole matter. Mrs Bradshaw, too unostentatious to feel any desire for commendation, was satisfied with accomplishing what she felt to be right, though she would certainly have been pleased with an expression of approbation, and she immediately set about the necessary preparations for removal.

B— had, for nearly a century, been one of those quiet country towns in which the only variations known are the deaths of the elder members of the families, and the younger ones springing up into their places—the changes of the seasons, and the alternations of day and night. The inhabitants had gone on for so many years in the same routine of events, that they looked upon anything which prognosticated advancement as an absolute evil. This state of things, however, had its day, and also its termination; for a railway was just at this period brought so near to the place, that it was deemed requisite to have a station there; and such a circumstance of course turned the heads of half the inhabitants, by exciting a desire for speculation. As in all other revolutions, the results were various: to some it wrought evil, to others good. In this instance, however, the preponderance was of the latter; and amongst those individuals who benefited was Mr Peter Bradshaw. His small unpretending shop by degrees assumed a more substantial and stylish appearance; and three years subsequently to the period when we commenced our narrative, at which time his lease had expired, he was able to renew it on highly advantageous terms. The fact was whispered, and not without some ground, though he would not own its truth, that he on this occasion consulted his wife regarding the length of time it would be most prudent to extend it.

Mr Bradshaw was one evening strolling, business hours being over, in the precincts of the railway station, amusing himself by watching the passengers alight—some looking anxiously after their luggage, some greeted by beloved and familiar faces, others seemingly lonely, and with little of worldly wealth to look after—when a smart rap on the shoulder, and a hearty ‘How do you do, my old friend?’ from a voice the tones of which were not unknown to him, aroused him from his contemplations, and he the next moment recognised the features of an old schoolmate. ‘Bradshaw, my dear fellow!’ exclaimed the traveller, now bending to seize him by the hand, and shaking it with earnestness; ‘I’m glad to see you—glad to see you; on my word, this is an unexpected pleasure.’

‘It is so on my part as well as on yours, my good friend,’ our hero returned, surveying with a pleased expression the almost gigantic form of his quondam play-fellow.

‘I lost sight of you when I settled in London,’ the traveller resumed; ‘but I’ve often thought of you. We used to be cronies at school, you know.’

‘Yes,’ Bradshaw rejoined, with a very undignified ‘he—he—he!’ ‘You used to fight my battles, correct all my exercises, and work my sums, for I never had much taste for such things.’

‘No, nor ability neither,’ thought his auditor; but he loved his little protégé, from the very fact of his having always looked up to him as a protector and friend, and was really pleased with having met him again.

‘Come home and take supper with me, and I’ll introduce you to my good lady,’ Bradshaw continued. ‘I’ve been an unlucky wight, but I’m getting on pretty comfortably now. How has the world treated you?’

‘Oh, I’ve managed at least to avoid failure; but I’ll accept of your kind invitation when I’ve secured a bed at the inn, and then we’ll make mutual revelations.’

‘Make our house your home for the night,’ exclaimed the draper: ‘we can find you a bed; and I see,’ glancing at the carpet-bag his friend held in his hand—‘I see you have your luggage with you. Let us go home at once.’

‘But are you sure that my stay will not be deemed an intrusion by Mrs Bradshaw?’ the traveller hesitatingly interposed; adding, ‘It is not, I know, always agreeable to ladies to perform the rites of hospitality for a stranger, without any previous intimation of the visit.’

‘Mrs Bradshaw never thinks of opposing anything I do or say,’ the little man pompously returned.

‘Indeed!’

‘I wouldn’t allow it; and, to do her justice,’ he pursued, ‘she never showed any inclination to dispute my authority. All the complaint I can make of her is, that she is a little too forward with her advice sometimes. But that has nothing to do with the present matter; she’ll make you welcome, I promise you. I never yet knew her look black upon a guest, let me invite him when I would.’

‘You seem, my good friend, to have been lucky in your choice of a wife at all events,’ the traveller observed; ‘and your description of your home is so inviting, that I cannot resist the very strong inclination I have to avail myself of your kind offer.’

‘That’s just what I wanted you to do. I’m not a man for unmeaning compliments,’ cried Bradshaw; and as he spoke, he with some difficulty linked his arm within that of his companion, and bustled towards his dwelling. ‘Are you married, Rawlins?’ he abruptly asked after a brief pause.

‘Oh yes, I’ve been married these seven years.’

‘Then I shrewdly guess that you have been foolish enough to let your wife get the upper hand: is it so?’

‘You’re quite mistaken there, my friend. My idea of happiness in married life is for man and wife to go hand in hand, and to have no upper hand in the matter.’

‘Oh—oh! that is your opinion, is it? Well, I can’t say it is mine. I could never live with a woman who did not allow me to be master.’

‘Nor I, my friend; but then I would, at the same time, allow her to be mistress.’

‘Then you are under female rule, after all, Rawlins?’

‘Not a bit of it; but I am under female influence.’

The friends had by this time reached the door of the house; and the cheerful smile which sat upon Mrs Bradshaw’s countenance, when told by her husband that he had brought home a guest for the night, and the alacrity with which she set about the necessary preparations for his accommodation, clearly indicated that the draper’s statements were perfectly correct. The absence of the lady gave the gentlemen an excellent opportunity for unrestrained confidence. Rawlins would not have hesitated to tell his tale if Mrs Bradshaw had been present, but poor Mr Bradshaw never could allude to the circumstances of his late failure in the hearing of his wife. The shrewd reader may possibly give a broad guess for what reason, but it was unacknowledged even to himself. Rawlins, at the request of his host, related his story first; but as it was void of interest, excepting to those who had a personal regard for him, we will not tire the reader with the recital.

‘My narrative is, you see, very barren of incident,’ he observed as he concluded. ‘I have had no hair-breadth escapes; no sudden reverses; no accounts of being dragged to a prison either for my own or any one else’s debts; and now, shall I tell you what has been the key to my prosperity?’

‘Why, you’ve been a fortunate fellow, that’s all; you always were so; you never got into the scrapes that I did when you were a boy.’

‘Fortune has had nothing to do with it, my friend,’ Rawlins exclaimed. ‘The secret of my success is this—I made choice of a good partner; and—’

‘Ah, you were lucky there at all events,’ Bradshaw interposed. ‘My partner has been my ruin.’

Rawlins looked up in astonishment. ‘What! that quiet, gentle-looking woman?’ he remarked. ‘Why, I thought—’

‘She! No, I don’t mean her: I mean the partner I took into my concern.’

Rawlins laughed heartily at his own blunder. 'I beg Mrs Bradshaw's pardon a thousand times,' he said; 'but, my good fellow, I was alluding to my wife when I spoke of my partner. I have had no other partner—I have needed none.'

'I took a young man into my business because he brought a thousand pounds, but he turned out a sad rogue.'

'Ah, I had no such inducement,' Rawlins interposed. 'I selected a partner with good sense and good principles; that was of far more value than a thousand pounds; and the secret of my success, my friend, is my having made use of those qualifications, and placed unbounded confidence in her.'

The little draper looked somewhat disconcerted, and glanced quickly round, to observe if Mrs Bradshaw were within hearing.

'Pshaw!' he pettishly exclaimed; 'you've been a fortunate fellow, that's the upshot of the matter.'

'I tell you once more, my good friend, that fortune had nothing to do with it; but we won't get into a dispute. Let me hear your story; I fancy it has more interest than mine.'

Bradshaw was not sorry to change the subject; and putting on a very dolorous aspect, he commenced his woful tale. Happy would he have been had Rawlins allowed him to proceed without interruption; but, as the poor little draper thought, some evil genius possessed him, and induced him to make occasional queries, which were by no means pleasant to answer. These were—'But what did your wife say to this?' 'What did Mrs Bradshaw advise?' 'Surely Mrs Bradshaw was more quicksighted?' 'Women are good advisers in such cases,' &c. The poor man got more nervous than ever when obliged to confess that Mrs Bradshaw had opposed his taking the new shop and the long lease; that she did object to young Smithson as a partner; and that she had done her utmost to prevent his niece's marriage; but he made an attempt to get out of the railway which, though not very quicksighted himself, he could not but foresee would follow, by lamenting that he had been born under such an unlucky planet.

'The planets have had no more to do with your disasters than I have, my worthy friend,' Rawlins interrupted him by exclaiming; 'but I'll give you a piece of information for which, if you make good use of it, you'll thank me if, at the end of another ten years, we should meet again.'

'Oh, I hope we shall meet long before that!' cried Bradshaw.

'I hope we shall; but be that as it may, you will thank me for the information whenever you see me.'

'Pray, what may it be?'

'I am afraid you will not make use of it without a little reluctance,' Rawlins resumed; 'but I'm confident that the result will fully recompense you for the effort it may cost you. It is this, my friend:—All your misfortunes have arisen from your having pursued a course diametrically opposed to that which I have taken; that is, from your having scorned the counsel of your wife.' Poor Bradshaw at that moment wished his old schoolmate anywhere but where he was; still he made no remark.

'Now, I tell you what it is, my good fellow,' Rawlins proceeded, 'we lords of the creation are apt to plume ourselves on a superiority we do not possess. We give the ladies credit for affection, gentleness, kindness, and all that sort of thing, but we fancy that all the intelligence, good sense, and sagacity are thrown into our scale—that is, our pates. I had an early opportunity of observing this. My father and a twin brother were partners in business, and occupied adjoining houses. They married, and commenced the world together, and they were as alike in character as in age. They were upright, well-meaning men, and were, in consequence, much esteemed; but they both held the lordly views of which I spoke. My father, happily for his family, made a wise choice in his partner for life; but there his wisdom

ended: he scorned to make use of her good sense and judgment, supposing, like you, that women ought not to be consulted in any matters beyond the household economy. My uncle was less happy in his selection. He married a giddy, thoughtless woman. Still, had he treated her with confidence, and showed her that he considered she had an equal interest with himself in his commercial success, he might possibly have corrected her thoughtlessness; but as this was not the case, she was always carrying on some petty deception, which wholly destroyed their original peace. I learned a valuable lesson, however, from their experience. Thinks I to myself, when I marry, I'll have a wife I can trust, and then I will trust her. She shall see that I expect her to take an interest in my wellbeing in everything. She shall be my confidant in every affair relating to my interest or my feelings; and she shall have no temptation to deceive me, because she shall not have any cause to complain that I am ungenerous. Well, I put these resolves into practice, and it has fully answered my expectations. Depend upon it, my friend,' he concluded, perceiving his companion was lost in a fit of musing—'depend upon it, there is no happiness in the marriage state without mutual confidence. The more a woman is trusted, the more she will feel that the interests of her husband are her own; and I believe that extravagant, mismanaging wives, are more frequently made so by the want of this confidence than by any other circumstance.'

The entrance of Mrs Bradshaw, followed by a little handmaid with a well-cooked savoury supper, put a stop to the conversation, also to poor Bradshaw's reverie; and in performing the rites of hospitality to his friend, he forgot, or at least pardoned, his telling him a truth which no one had ever had the moral courage to tell him before.

It was nearly three years ere the two friends again met, and then it was by the same fireside, though the room they occupied contained many useful and ornamental articles which it had not done at the former meeting. Mrs Bradshaw being present the greater part of the evening, Rawlins could not allude to the subject of their last conversation; but he thought, from the fact of her being present, that there was some improvement in the quarter where he most desired it. At length he found an opportunity of whispering a word in Bradshaw's ear; but as it was a whisper, and only heard by the person to whom it was spoken, we cannot be expected to make the reader acquainted with it. The answer of the little draper will, however, possibly elucidate the mystery. It was this: 'I've not forgotten it, my good fellow; I've not forgotten your prophecy, and I can't help fulfilling it. Thank ye—thank ye!'

GENUINE CONVERSATION OF A CURIOUS MAN.

A GENTLEMAN remarkable for his curiosity, retired in his latter days to a rural villa near one of the principal rivers in Scotland, where time used to hang rather heavily on his hands. Nevertheless, his curiosity was active, and he was wont to go forth every day to the roads, and to a ferry station in his neighbourhood, where he would assail travellers of all kinds, in order to make them give an account of themselves. He would make even beggars stand and deliver—their histories; after which they were usually surprised when he gave them only a civil good-morning. A lady who lived near his house was one morning walking in her garden, when she became an involuntary listener to the following conversation, in which she was herself referred to; the interlocutors being the curious man and a peasant whom she had despatched on a small piece of business:—

'Well, honest man, what's this you've got in your cart?'

'Some draft.'

'Draft! What are you going to do with draft?'

'It's for Miss ———.'

'Miss ———! What is she going to do with draft?'

'It's to feed her cow, I reckon.'

'And where have ye gotten't?'

'At the New Town.'

'At the New Town! Wha did ye get it frae?'
 'Frae Lord Belhaven.'
 'Lord Belhaven!! (*Great surprise.*) How do ye come to get draff frae Lord Belhaven?'
 'It's frae his distillery.'
 'Oh, ay, the distillery. Ye've got it frae Lord Belhaven's distillery. But ye wadna get it for naething?'
 'Na.'
 'And what did ye pay for't then?'
 'Twa shillings the sack.'
 'And ye'll ha'e to get something to yoursel'?'
 'I'll get a shilling, I reckon.'
 'Ay, a shilling to yoursel'. But there would be a toll?'
 'Yes, sixpence.'
 'Ay, sixpence for a toll. Twa shillings a sack for the draff is four shillings; a shilling to yoursel' makes five; and sixpence for the toll makes five-and-sixpence. Five-and-sixpence in all. My friend, I begin to understand you now. You've got twa sacks of draff frae Lord Belhaven's distillery at the New Town for Miss ——'s cow, at twa shillings the sack, with a shilling for yoursel', and sixpence for a toll, being five-and-sixpence in all. Good-morning t'ye. Jenny [addressing his wife, who always walked behind], come away home to breakfast.'

SACREDNESS OF THE QUESTION OF SANITARY LAWS.

The aristocracy only visit the cities in the season, and spend the rest of the year in the purest of atmospheres and the healthiest of mansions. Even when 'up,' they have a city within a city—spacious houses, wide streets, remote from manufacturing nuisances. Merchants, and the higher class of tradesmen, have the country or suburban villas, and, whatever the air they breathe in the day, spend the evenings, nights, and mornings far away from smoke and smell. All who can afford it, have their annual excursion 'to lay in' a stock of health and spirit for the year. It is not so with the vast majority. They have no such chances for health and existence. From hour to hour, day to day, and year to year, they must go on respiring in the same tainted atmosphere in which the majority came into the world. As we pass through the streets, and hasten, with mixed terror and disgust, first through one ill savour and then through another, by filthy corner, open grating, dark alley, or noisome workshop, we should remember that these airs of hell, the merest waft of which is enough to turn our stomachs, are the fixed conditions under which many thousands live and die. It is for them, not for us, not for the fortunate and free, that sanitary laws are needed. *Their case imparts necessity and sacredness to the question.—Times.*

ANTS IN SOUTH AMERICA.

But there is one variety of ant which must be excluded from all commendation. There is a small species, called Saüba, and they are a terrible annoyance to the proprietors of rosinhas, inasmuch as they strip the fruit-trees of their leaves. An army of these will march to the tree, part ascending, and the others remaining below. Those above commence their devastation, clipping off the leaves by large pieces; and those below shoulder them as they fall, and march away to their rendezvous. It is surprising what a load one of these little things will carry, as disproportionate to its size as if a man should stalk off beneath an oak. Before morning, not a leaf is left upon the tree, and the unfortunate proprietor has the consolation of knowing that, unless he can discover the retreat of the saübas, and unwhole them, one by one every tree upon his premises will be stripped.—*Edwards's Voyage up the Amazon.*

THE LAW'S DELAY.

In the one case, there is a straight road of a mile long, and without a turnpike in it; in the other case, you may go to, or at least towards, the same place by a road of a hundred miles in length—full, accordingly, of turnings and windings—full, moreover, of quicksands and pitfalls, and equally full of turnpikes. In conducting the traveller, nothing obliges the conductors to avoid the straight road, and drag him along the crooked one: nor would they ever have given themselves any such trouble, had it not been for the turnpikes, the tolls of which are so regularly settled, and the tills in such good keeping—learned feet, could they be prevailed on, are no less capable of treading the short road than unlearned ones.—*Benthamiana.*

THE KILT, THE CLAYMORE, AND THE COTTON UMBRELLA!

TUNE—'Cam' ye by Athole?'

CAN ye by Badenoch, lad w' the paletôt?
 Saw ye the Highlanders, loyal, good fellows?
 Wapped in their dripping plaids, wiping their rusting blades,
 'Waiting their Queen under cotton umbrellas!

Badenoch, Badenoch, who isn't proud of thee?
 Were not thy sons ever loyal, brave fellows?
 Who wouldn't rush to thee, ay, stand a crush for thee?
 Though it should pelt, ye have store of umbrellas!

Macpherson of Cluny, and Tulloch, I feel for them;
 They've drawn out their men like Castilian guerrillas;
 To welcome their Prince and Queen, such a sight ne'er was seen—
 Highlanders ranked under cotton umbrellas!

Highlanders, Highlanders, well have ye fought of yore,
 Led by the sound of your bagpipers' bellows!
 Now for your tartans green, find ye a proper screen,
 Under your chiefs—and your cotton umbrellas!

But ye had example set, under the heavy wet;
 Didn't the Queen, as the newspapers tell us,
 Ay, and the Prince and train, land in the pouring rain,
 Under the shelter of 'goodly umbrellas'?

Wet Caledonia! who wouldn't drown for thee?
 Are not your sons loyal, brave-hearted fellows?
 Keeping their powder dry, while with a smothered cry,
 Comes a damp welcome from under umbrellas!

—September 1847.

* * * 'Her Majesty,' says the correspondent of the Morning Chronicle, 'landed under cover of a goodly umbrella, carried by her own royal hands. The judicial authorities of the county of Inverness—Mr Tytler, the sheriff, and Mr A. Fraser, one of his substitutes—were in due attendance; and there was a tolerable turn-out of the men of Lochaber, with plaids, kilts, claymores, and cotton umbrellas, who waved glittering blades and dripping gingham, and shouted Gaelic salutations to the "wife of the king"—for such, I understand, is the literal signification of *Bhan Rìgh*—the Erse words meaning Queen.'

DOGMATISM.

Maintain a constant watch at all times against a dogmatic spirit: fix not your assent to any proposition in a firm and unalterable manner till you have some firm and unalterable ground for it, and till you have arrived at some clear and sure evidence—till you have turned the proposition on all sides, and searched the matter through and through, so that you cannot be mistaken. And even where you think you have full grounds for assurance, be not too early nor too frequent in expressing this assurance in too peremptory and positive a manner, remembering that human nature is always liable to mistake in this corrupt and feeble state.—*Watts.*

WASTE OF LABOUR.

There are in some of the villages of the wolds of Lincolnshire, farm labourers who regularly walk 1252 miles, in going and returning from their work, year after year; and several have done so for eight or nine successive years, thus travelling nearly the distance of half round the world in that time, besides performing their regular work. One man can be pointed out who has walked this distance for fourteen years; and others in the same place whose yearly journeys to and from work amount to 1666 miles; and all this because of the law of settlement preventing them from living near their work!—*Newspaper paragraph.* [An argument for erecting cottages for labourers near the scene of their labours.]

UNWISE CHOICE.

A very fool is he that chooses for beauty principally; his eyes are witty, but his soul is sensual; it is an ill band of affection to tie two hearts together by a little thread of red and white.—*Jeremy Taylor.*

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